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SPORTS

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# THE POST-STANDARD

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SYRACUSE, N.Y.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1987

30 CENTS

## 'Turmoil' in the Medical Examiner's Office

Complaints, Friction  
Force Reorganization

By THOMAS HEATH  
And ROBERT W. ANDREWS  
Onondaga County Medical Examiner Erik Mitchell, acknowledging his office has been in "turmoil" the past several months, said Friday he plans a major reorganization of the department.

The office has been rocked by problems, including:

- A falling-out between Mitchell and his hand-picked director of operations, William Sullivan.
- "We have seen the world through different eyes," Mitchell said, adding that the reorganization will possibly result in Sullivan's departure.
- Complaints by survivors that Mitchell has failed to complete death certificates and failed to inform them of the causes of death.
- In one case, an attorney said he obtained an order this week from state Health Commissioner David Axelrod demanding that Mitchell state a cause of death, as is required by law.
- A sexual harassment suit brought by a county employee against a member of Mitchell's staff. The complaint was settled out of court.
- The resignation of several staff members, including the only other physician in

the office, because of disagreements with Mitchell.

County Executive John Mulroy acknowledged Friday that the office has problems, but he and Dr. James Miller, the county health commissioner, said Mitchell has their total support and confidence.

"They have an administrative problem over there," Mulroy said. "There've been several people who quit. It's a sign of problems. People just don't usually quit their jobs."

Mulroy said he noticed Mitchell was working too hard this past summer and strongly urged him to take a vacation.

"He's the hardest-working man I ever met," Mulroy said. "He works 100 hours at a crack. I asked him to slow down. He

looked like a wreck."

Mitchell acquiesced and took two weeks off, explaining that he had "a lot of simultaneous difficulties."

In addition, Mulroy said he demanded that Mitchell stop performing autopsies for Orange County — autopsies that earned extra money for county taxpayers. Mitchell said he agreed that he should stop performing the extra autopsies.

Mitchell, 36, oversees an office of 15 employees who are responsible for investigating all county homicides, suicides and accidental or unexplained deaths. His office performs about 600 autopsies a year, a number considerably higher than most counties of a similar size.

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DR. ERIK MITCHELL  
'Simultaneous Difficulties'

### Isn't It Rich?



Syracuse United Neighbors staged a "trick or treat" protest Friday, so City Hall staffers countered by disguising them-

selves as SUN leader Richard Puchalski. From left, they are Tim Carroll, Frank Lazarak and Neil Driscoll. Story, Page B-1.

## Piedmont, USAir Deal Approved

By JONATHAN D. SALANT  
Washington Bureau

The U.S. Transportation Department overruled an administrative law judge's decision Friday and approved the merger of USAir Group Inc. and Piedmont Aviation Inc.

The decision supporting the \$1.6 billion merger will create the nation's fifth-largest airline, one that will dominate traffic at Syracuse Hancock International Airport.

In overturning the judge's recommendation, the DOT rejected his assertion that the merger would reduce competition in several markets.

"Although the acquisition will eliminate non-stop competition in a few markets, we conclude that other carriers will have the ability to discipline fares and service in those overlap markets, either by instituting non-stop service or by offering connecting service," said Matthew Soccozza, the DOT's

### What It Means

- The \$1.6 billion acquisition of Piedmont Aviation by USAir Group will create the nation's fifth-largest airline.

- The carriers now represent 62 percent of flights at Syracuse Hancock International Airport, a major hub for both.

- The airline will merge separately for nine months, with Piedmont then converting its planes and uniforms to USAir's colors and logo.

Source: Washington Bureau

assistant secretary for policy and international affairs.

"Accordingly, we do not find that the acquisition is likely to reduce competition substantially in any relevant market."

USAir and Piedmont officials had urged Soccozza to reverse the administrative law judge's recommendation.

(Continued on Page A-7)

## Reagan, Gorbachev to Meet Dec. 7-9 in D.C.

Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — President Reagan announced Friday he and Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev will meet in Washington Dec. 7-9 for a summit the president said he hopes will turn the anniversary of the Pearl Harbor bombing into a day remembered as the start of superpower peace.

Standing between Secretary of State George F. Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze, Reagan said he and Gorbachev will sign a treaty banning medium- and short-range

### Politburo Dispute/A-8

nuclear missiles, the first superpower arms-control agreement in eight years.

Reagan also said he and Gorbachev have agreed to meet in Moscow during the first six months of next year, possibly to sign a treaty that would cut in half the superpowers' arsenals of long-range strategic weapons.

A few details remain to be worked out on the intermediate-

range pact, which would outlaw missiles with ranges of between 300 and 3,000 miles, but Shultz said the treaty is so close to being complete that if it is not ready by the start of the summit, "Mr. Shevardnadze and I are going to get kicked in the rear."

Gorbachev's agreement to make the first visit to the United States by a Soviet leader since Leonid I. Brezhnev came in 1973 was a dizzying reversal of the position he had taken just a week earlier.

At the end of a Kremlin meeting Oct. 23, Gorbachev shocked U.S.

officials by refusing to set a summit date after Shultz refused to promise that the United States would agree to curb on its Strategic Defense Initiative, the space-based missile defense program.

But Gorbachev seemed to make all of the concessions required to get the meeting back on track by sending Shevardnadze to Washington to fix the summit date. And he appeared to relax his insistence on restrictions on anti-missile defenses as the price for progress in other areas of arms control.

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EDUARD SHEVARNADZE  
Irons Out Details with Shultz

## ESG Audit Criticizes Contracts, Spending

Staff and News Service Reports

State officials who managed the popular Empire State Games in Buffalo were blasted Friday by state Controller Edward Regan for making an end run around state spending controls and bidding procedures.

In his audit of the 1985 and '86 Games in Buffalo, Regan said, "We found that major purchases were made without competitive bidding, questionable transactions were made, expenditures were not always properly monitored, and key items in the contracts were not followed."

Among other things, Regan auditors said that in 1985 and 1986 games director Michael Abernethy ordered that medals, uniforms, photography, printing services and television and radio services be bought from specific vendors without competitive bidding.

Although Regan's audit did not deal with the 1987 games in Syracuse, local merchants here had complained of similar problems. Several T-shirt stores near Marshall Street protested that Aber-

(Continued on Page A-4)

## Mother Guilty

Jury Issues Landmark Ruling  
In Suicide of Nude Dancer, 17

News Service Reports

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — Theresa Jackson, accused of provoking her daughter's suicide by forcing her to dance in nude bars, was found guilty Friday of all three counts against her.

The Broward Circuit Court jury of five women and one man returned the verdict after more than two days of deliberations on Jackson's role in the death of Tina Mancini, 17.

In March 1986, three months after she began nude dancing, Mancini killed herself with her mother's .357-caliber Magnum.

The case — featuring sensational testimony about beliefs in astral travel and exorcism in the Jackson household — is considered a landmark.

(Continued on Page A-4)



Theresa Jackson is fingerprinted in Broward, Fla., Circuit Court Friday.

## City Drops Effort to Hold Oil City Land for Congel

By JOHN GALLAGHER

City officials agreed Friday to sell the disputed Augsburg terminal in Oil City to two oil companies rather than prolong a legal fight over the property.

Frank Harrigan, the city's corporation counsel, said the city will complete the sale of the property to Citgo and Alaskan Oil early next week.

The oil firms had signed a contract with the city in June to buy the abandoned Augsburg terminal in Oil City for \$250,000. Each firm hoped to expand its current operations into the Augsburg site, which consists of about a dozen unused oil tanks on either side of Solar

Street.

But in July, developer Robert Congel announced his plans to build a mall nearby and to spur renovation of the rest of Oil City, including the Augsburg terminal, into a residential and office area.

City officials solidly support Congel's plan, and tried to back out of the deal with Citgo and Alaskan. Harrigan admitted Friday that if the city had known of Congel's plans in advance, "We probably wouldn't have sold it to them."

The two oil firms sued the city. Supreme Court Judge Parker Stone recently handed down a pre-

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## SUPERPOWER SUMMIT: A DATE FOR DECEMBER

## Summit Briefing

## Senate's 'Guard Up' On Missile Treaty

WASHINGTON (AP) — The announcement of a U.S.-Soviet summit is "good news," senators said Friday, but they vowed to open debate on a medium-range missile treaty with caution.

"Summits are an opportunity to do business, but a summit is not an end in itself," said Minority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan. "We go into this with our guard up and our eyes open," said Majority Leader Robert C. Byrd, D-W.Va.

## Gorbachev's Book Urges Quick Reform

MOSCOW (AP) — Mikhail S. Gorbachev says in his forthcoming book that any delay of his economic reforms could cause a serious political crisis in the Soviet Union.

Although pushing his reforms and criticizing some actions of previous regimes, Gorbachev says Josef Stalin's collectivization of agriculture and the Communist Party ouster of Nikita Khrushchev were both necessary and justified.

The book goes on sale in the United States in November.

## Won't Miss a Stroke

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary of State George P. Shultz vowed last week that nothing would interfere with his plans to play golf today in Augusta, Ga. Little did he know that Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze would come to Washington.

But, luckily for Shultz, the summit talks wound up Friday.

Asked at a news conference whether he still intends to go to Augusta, Shultz smiled and said: "You better believe it."

## Politburo Clash May Have Delayed Summit Date

Los Angeles Times  
MOSCOW — A sharp dispute involving one of Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev's leading disciples broke out last week at a Communist Party Central Committee meeting, Soviet sources said Friday, but they denied it had anything to do with last week's delay in setting a date for a superpower summit.

However, conflicting reports in Moscow and the West made it unclear whether the dispute involved criticism of Gorbachev or criticism of his opponents.

Unconfirmed but widespread reports here said the clash erupted when Boris N. Yeltsin, Moscow party chief, asserted that some members of the Politburo had slowed the pace of the "perestroika," or restructuring, advocated by Gorbachev.

Yeltsin, 56, a junior member of the ruling body who is known for being more outspo-

ken than his top ranking colleagues, dramatized his criticism by offering to resign, the reports said.

However, The New York Times reported Friday that Yeltsin, regarded as an all-out Gorbachev supporter, turned on his leader and accused him of cultivating a cult of personality, an extremely serious charge in Soviet political parlance used to describe Josef Stalin's transgressions.

The term implies that a Soviet leader is ignoring the consensus of the political elite on important policy issues and substituting his individual will for that of the party.

That attack, according to the Times, ignited a political crisis that may have caused Gorbachev to delay agreeing to a summit date last week when he held talks with Secretary of State George P. Shultz.

But Friday, Yeltsin told CBS anchorman Dan Rather he had made no such attack.

"No, no, I categorically deny it. I never said it. A categorical no!" Yeltsin said.

Several Western observers said it is very difficult to believe Yeltsin would make such a statement.

In another version of the events at the meeting, Yeltsin was said to have aimed his criticism at some Soviet newspapers and magazines, not at Gorbachev personally, for over-praising perestroika and virtually idolizing the leader.

Still another version, the one that appears to have most credibility with Western observers, is that Yeltsin criticized Yegor K. Ligachev, generally regarded as the second-ranking member of the Politburo and a Gorbachev rival, for blocking the progress of perestroika.

Ligachev, according to this version, counterattacked by saying Yeltsin had accomplished very little in improving Moscow

services since taking office two years ago.

In Washington, a senior administration specialist in Soviet affairs said reports that Yeltsin directed his criticism exclusively to Ligachev are more plausible than accounts that Yeltsin attacked Gorbachev.

Yeltsin, he noted, is considered a strong proponent of Gorbachev's program to revitalize the Soviet economy, while Ligachev has frequently struck a more conservative tone on economic reform and the partial relaxation of censorship.

Other U.S. analysts have said Ligachev appears to share Gorbachev's belief that economic reform is needed to enable the Soviet Union to compete with the West and preserve its military power. But he appears uneasy about the rapid pace and direction of reforms toward a more market-oriented economy, and he has positioned himself to succeed Gorbachev.



President Reagan, Secretary of State George Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze meet reporters Friday.

## U.S., Soviets to Sign INF Treaty In D.C., Plan '88 Moscow Meeting

(Continued from Page A-1)

Shultz told a news conference the administration made no concessions in the time between the Moscow and Washington meetings, and he was unable to explain the Soviet turnaround.

At a separate conference, Shevardnadze agreed that the United States had made no new concessions. He said the two sides agreed on the "concept and agenda" for the summit — something he said was not determined last week.

A joint announcement said in the coming months "both sides will work toward early achievement of a treaty implementing the agreement to reduce strategic offensive arms by 50 percent, which could be signed during the president's visit to Moscow."

Unlike previous joint statements, that sentence was not followed by a reference to restric-

tions on space and defensive weapons.

Reagan said the United States is prepared to discuss defensive systems, but "I've made it clear — and they have not rejected this — that there's no way that we can give up SDI, which we believe is offering an opportunity for peace for the world."

A strategic arms reduction treaty would have far more military significance than the intermediate-range nuclear force (INF) pact Reagan and Gorbachev plan to sign in December. But there is no guarantee the two sides will be able to reach agreement during the six to eight months left before the presidential election season reaches a point that will make additional U.S.-Soviet summit meetings unlikely.

Reagan clearly was elated Gorbachev had finally set a date for

his visit to the United States. When asked whether he is concerned that the summit will start Dec. 7, the 46th anniversary of the surprise Japanese bombing that brought the United States into World War II, Reagan said: "Wouldn't it be wonderful if Pearl Harbor day would become superseded by the day that we began the path to peace and safety in the world through disarmament?"

Shultz said the INF treaty is virtually complete. Under the proposed agreement, the Soviet Union will remove and destroy 693 missiles in Europe and Asia carrying a total of 1,575 nuclear warheads. The United States will remove and destroy 332 missiles in Europe, each with a single warhead.

The signing of the INF treaty will mark the first time an entire class of nuclear weapons will be eliminated.

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## Medical Examiner Plans Shake-Up in Office

(Continued from Page A-1)

Mulroy, who appointed Mitchell to the \$78,785-a-year job in September 1983, said the problems at the office have surfaced only recently.

Part of the solution, Mitchell said, is a reorganization that he plans to propose in November to the Onondaga County Legislature.

"I'm doing everything I know how to improve the quality of work," Mitchell said.

Mitchell will ask that he be allowed to create a new forensic anthropologist position and to make unspecified internal reassignments.

He also intends to fill vacant positions for two physicians, one to replace Dr. Ernst Jean, a pathologist who resigned Sept. 30 after 14 months with the office.

"I was very sorry to see him go," Mitchell said of Jean.

But he acknowledged he has had differences with Sullivan and other office employees, some of

whom have resigned.

One employee left, Mitchell said, because of "his dissatisfaction with my leadership in the office."

Sources have told The Post-Standard that Sullivan and Mitchell have a long history of mutual office policies, which included personnel changes.

Sullivan, a former funeral director, was recruited by Mitchell in spring 1984 to serve as the medical examiner's top aide. His salary is in the \$30,000-to-\$36,000 range.

Mitchell had high praise for Sullivan's investigative abilities Friday, but said the two have had "some differences" and that Sullivan may be departing.

Both Sullivan and Jean declined to comment Friday.

Aside from personnel difficulties, the office has been criticized by the survivors of some deceased

persons whose deaths were handled by Mitchell's office.

Miller said Friday he knows of

three or four cases in which there have been complaints because the medical examiner did not state a cause of death.

"I don't know what the normal rate of trouble is," Miller said. "People suggest something happened that Dr. Mitchell could not find. But you cannot always find a cause of death."

One of those cases involved the suspicious death of Dr. Nanette Gordon, a 39-year-old resident in pathology who worked as an intern in the medical examiner's office.

She died in August 1985 and Mitchell has not yet determined a cause of death. Her mother and brother believe Nanette was murdered.

Attorney Sidney Manes, hired by the family, said the law requires Mitchell to complete a death certificate even if the cause of death is indicated as "unknown."

"He can't say 'pending,'" Manes argued. "It's incredible that he's

sitting on this."

Manes said he obtained an order from Axelrod Friday, demanding that Mitchell "do his duty" and complete the death certificate. Manes said the order was mailed Friday.

The attorney said either Mitchell or District Attorney Richard Hennessy should be obligated to conduct a formal inquiry into the death.

Mitchell said the law forbids him from divulging details of the case.

"I would love to discuss that case," Mitchell said. "I would like to make sure all information is made available to everybody."

He said disclosures by the family concerning specific details brought the case before him to ask the county attorney if he can now release details of the Gordon case.

"I want to make available all the information that I have available," Mitchell said.

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